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Minden Hills calls state of emergency

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

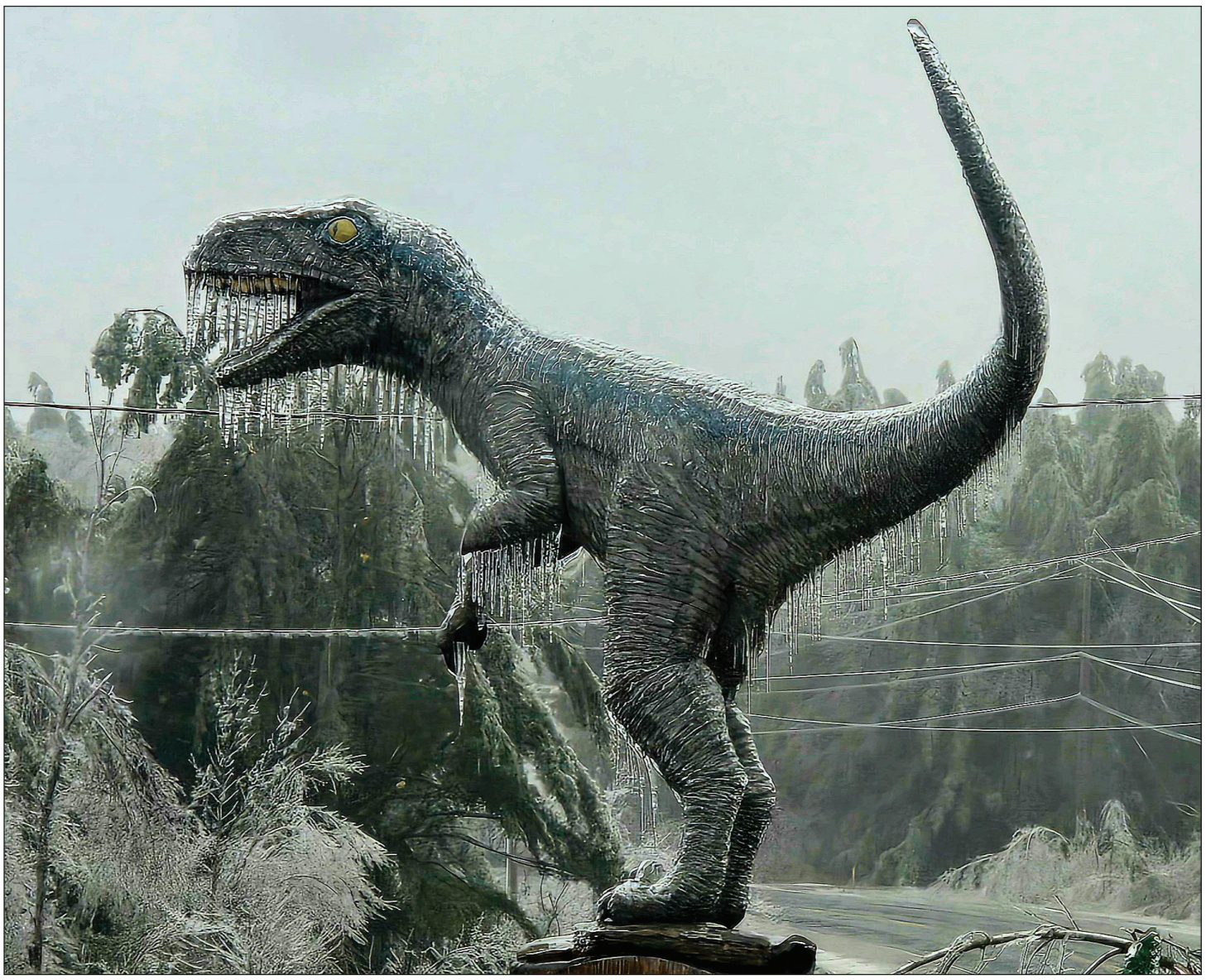
The Township of Minden Hills has declared a state of emergency in light of the ice storm that ravaged Haliburton County over the weekend, leaving the vast majority of residents without access to hydro, internet, or cellphone service. The County of Haliburton declared a partial state of emergency the evening of March 31, 2025, in an effort to support the needs of Minden Hills. "The County Emergency Operations Centre has been established and is monitoring the situation," said the County in a media release. "(We are) working with the Township of Minden Hills, Province, and neighbouring municipalities to address conditions."

Poor road conditions and declining visibility resulted in a wealth of community events being postponed or cancelled altogether over the weekend, with the OPP continuing to encourage folks to stay off the roads. While the whole county was slammed by the storm, it is apparent that Minden took the biggest hit, with many power lines still down at the time of press.

The storm began to roll in the evening of Friday, March 28, with sleet starting around 6 p.m. for the majority of the Haliburton Highlands. Freezing rain took shape over the course of the evening, with power flickering on Saturday, March 29. The brunt of the storm hit on Sunday, March 30, with over 85 per cent of Haliburton County residents experiencing power loss.

"Crews are out in full force," said a red flashing notice on the Hydro One website. "More than 532,000 customers have been restored since the start of the storm … At this time, we anticipate it will take several days to restore all customers. We won't stop until

see OPP page 2



A very cold dinosaur sits perched at the Carving Gallery in Moore Falls during the ice storm that slammed the county this past weekend. /photo submitted by Johnny Waite

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Ice Storm 2025

The County of Haliburton roads department cleared trees on County Road 121. /Karen London staff

OPP urges residents to stay safe

from page 1

every customer is restored."

The site noted that crews prioritize restoration in a way that brings power back to the greatest number of customers in the shortest period of time.

While many knew to stay off the roads, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) noted that they have been significantly busier than usual. "Several trees have fallen due to the weight of ice, injuring individuals and causing widespread damage," reads an OPP media release. "If at all possible, remain indoors. Roads are hazardous, and conditions are likely to worsen as the freezing rain continues."

The afternoon of March 28, as the storm started to roll in, the County of Haliburton declared a Significant Weather Event, which included all four townships. "This declaration may change how or when the County or Municipalities perform their maintenance operations," reads a press release from Angelica Ingram, the manager of tourism for the county, "and may increase the amount of time to bring the roads back to a state of repair."

All schools in Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB), including all schools in Haliburton County, were cancelled for Monday, March 31, and Tuesday, April 1. "This decision was made for the safety of students and staff, and we are communicating with families now in an effort to give time to make alternative arrangements," said Carolynne Bull, the manager of communications from TLDSB.

As of April 1, 2025, Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) continues to stay in a Code Grey, which means all telephone and internet services are offline. "The Emergency Department is open," said HHHS in a public release they shared on social media. "Please only use the Emergency Department in a true emergency. Most out-patient services have been cancelled, and we are unable to rebook at this time."

A warming centre has been opened in Minden at the S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Centre, located at 55 Parkside Street and is available 24 hours a day.

For the coming days, Environment Canada is predicting warmer temperatures and increased precipitation. Hydro One will continue to restore power as quickly as they can, and remind the public to stay away from fallen lines. The OPP are continuing to encourage individuals to stay off the roads and indoors to prevent injuries from fallen trees.

STR rules may discourage cottage sales, says realtor

by **JAMES MATTHEWS**
Times Staff

According to a major Canadian real estate company, demand for recreational homes outpaces supply despite economic uncertainty due to the trade war with the United States.

But tighter regulations on short-term rental (STR) properties have dampened prospects in Ontario.

All of Canada's provincial recreational markets are expected to see an increase in home prices this year.

The pandemic-era scramble for recreational properties, once reminiscent of a modern-day gold rush, has eased. And so has the chaos of bidding wars and thin inventories, said Phil Soper, president and CEO of Royal LePage.

"Demand for recreational properties among Canadians, and the lifestyle they offer, remains strong but balanced," he said. "While the mainstream market is more sensitive to economic shifts, demand in the recreational segment remains steadfast, even during periods of market hesitation.

"Many families share the deep-rooted desire to own a recreational home and that is unlikely to change."

In 2024, the weighted median price of a single-family home in Canada's recreational property regions increased 2.3 per cent year over year to $627,700. When broken out by housing type, the weighted median price of a single-family waterfront property decreased 3.6 per cent year over year to $1,063,400 in 2024. The weighted median price of a standard condominium remained flat, rising a modest 0.2 per cent to $431,700 during the same period.

"After three years of double-digit price growth during and after the pandemic, recreational property values have settled slightly below peak for the 2025 season," said Soper.

Demand between 2021-23 for cottages surged as Canadians traded cityscapes for lakefront living amid lockdowns, travel restrictions, and the shift to remote work. That pushed prices to record highs.

Now market is seeing a return to typical year-over-year price growth.

"Looking ahead, recreational property prices are expected to rise modestly, driven by ongoing supply shortages," he said. "New cottages and cabins aren't being built fast enough to meet buyer demand, which will continue to support long-term price growth."

There may be one factor, new to the Haliburton County region, that may dampen prospects.

When cottage owners aren't using their seasonal retreat, many choose to rent it out to help offset operational costs. However, growing restrictions on STRs have made this difficult in some regions.

Soper said the option to rent out your cottage or cabin in the off-season to generate income is becoming increasingly challenging. That's because of tighter STR regulations in many regions, particularly in Ontario, Quebec, and B.C.

"If policies aimed at severely restricting the recreational rental market persist, they risk discouraging buyers and dampening local economies," he said. "Seasonal tourism is a vital contributor to employment, small business success, and regional development in cottage country."

So locally in 2024, the weighted median price of a single-family home in Ontario's recreational property market decreased 1.5 per cent year over year to $640,700 compared to 2023. During the same period, the weighted median price of a standard condominium decreased 5.7 per cent to $468,900.

According to a Royal LePage survey of recreational property experts, 39 per cent of respondents in Ontario reported less inventory this year compared to 2024. Additionally, 46 per cent of respondents reported similar demand.

In the region, 61 per cent of experts said that the average days on market has increased since this time last year.

"The Muskoka region has seen a gradual uptick in its inventory levels, which is good news for buyers who are looking for a specific type of recreational property and want more selection to choose from," said John O'Rourke, a broker at Royal LePage Lakes of Muskoka.

But hold on.

"Neither increased supply levels nor lower interest rates have translated into a significant boost in demand just yet, leading to higher-than-usual days on market for this time of year," he said. "Strict short-term rental regulations continue to deter investors and those hoping to lease their properties during the off-season."

As a result, most buyers in today's market are end-users purchasing primarily for personal vacation use, O'Rourke said.

Winterized cottages with strong internet connectivity remain the most in-demand properties, offering the flexibility for remote work.

"In the short term, ongoing tariffs and broader economic uncertainty are expected to keep market activity relatively flat this spring," said O'Rourke.

Ice Storm 2025

/Reed Sacharoff staff

/Reed Sacharoff staff

/Submitted

/Karen London staff

Carbon tax cut to impact local gas prices

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

It's no April Fool's Joke: the consumer carbon tax is over, as of April 1, 2025.

In his first move as Prime Minister, Mark Carney cut the tax, which had been added to carbon-emitting products by fuel type. For regular gasoline, it was 17.6 cents a litre, and natural gas was 15.25 cents per cubic metre.

Carney cited the tax as "divisive", despite being put in place by fellow Liberal Justin Trudeau in 2019, in an effort to incentivize Canadians to shift to greener energy sources.

The federal tax was officially axed in every province across Canada with the exception of Quebec, which had a provincial tax in place, and had not adopted the federal tax. British Columbia also had a provincial carbon tax, but quickly cut it as well, in light of the federal decision.

The tax was a point of sale charge, so should come off immediately at the time of purchase. That means, for a standard 50-litre gas tank, one would save approximately $8.80 when filling up.

Canadians will feel the impact of the tax cut as well when it comes to home heating, but because those are billed monthly, the overall status of the tax removal may take a bit longer to take shape.

Approximately 12 million Canadians were receiving quarterly carbon rebates, which ranged from $719 to $1779, depending on their carbon footprint. Smaller, low-income households will feel the loss of these regular rebates, since the tax was designed to give a rebate bigger than the cost lost at the pump for over 80 per cent of Canadians.

The last rebate cheques will be available April 15, 2025.

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DROP-IN SCHEDULE AND SPRING PROGRAMMING

- The new spring drop-in schedule is available online at www.mindenhills.ca/recreation or in person at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena. Check out the schedule and come and join one of the many drop-in programs available.
- There is still space in the upcoming spring youth programming. Register online or in person at the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena Administration Desk for basketball, soccer, volleyball, multi-sport or creative minds.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Season starts on April 1 and ends on October 31 in any given year. There is no daytime burning permitted. Fire restrictions are from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm (Daytime Burning).

SPRING LOAD RESTRICTIONS (HALF LOADS) IN EFFECT

Half Load weight restrictions are placed on roadways and posted each year in the spring for approximately 1-2 months. Persons contravening this regulation will be prosecuted under Section 122 of The Highway Traffic Act. Please watch for and obey posted signage.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

April 10 – Regular Council Meeting

April 24 – Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

- *We're Still Talking*, an exhibit of fibre works by local artists Sandi Luck, Nadine Papp and Wendy Wood will be on display until May 10 in the Agnes Jamieson Gallery.
- *We Were Taught Differently (Bakaan nake'ii ngii-izhigakinoo'amaagoomin)* an exhibit created by The MUSE (Kenora, Ontario) will be on display from April 1 to June 28 in the Welch Room. The exhibit examines the Indian residential school experience, particularly in the two schools that were in Kenora – Cecilia Jeffrey and St. Mary's.
- A special screening of *Cold Journey* (1975) on April 3 at 1:00pm. Directed by Martin Defalco, this is a poignant drama about Indigenous youth in 1970's Canada. The documentary is provided courtesy of the National Film Board, in partnership with the HCPL – Minden Branch.
- The UFO Craft Group will meet in the Welch Room on Friday, April 4 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

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Test your trivia; how one beer lover plays the game

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

Above, Doug Salloum, left, plays BrewHouse with the owner of Haliburton Highlands Brewing, Michael Schiedel-Webb. Salloum has developed the beer-loving trivia game in an effort to bring to life the beauty of craft beer. /photos submitted.

Beer and board games; some would say it's a match made in heaven.

At least that's what Doug Salloum, the creator of BrewHouse, a trivia-based board game, firmly believes. "I have an appreciation for craft beer," said Salloum. "It's much more interesting than the average beer.

Salloum has a versatile background, with an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from McGill university, and a special interest in environmentally sustainable projects.

He's worked in finance, in farming, in engineering, in teaching, but nothing has held his interest more than beer has. At one point during a career of twists and turns, he and his wife, Ruth-Ann, dove into pub ownership. "Like a lot of things I get into, I didn't know anything about it," chuckled Salloum.

But he said that's where the fire was originally lit. He stocked his bar with a variety of craft brews from across the country, and was in awe of the ever-changing environment of micro-breweries.

It was at this point that he chose to return to school to learn the art and science of brewing; earning himself a brewing certificate from Niagara College. He worked as a brewer at MacKinnon Brothers Brewery in Bath, Ontario, up until his retirement three and a half years ago.

"But I really missed it," Salloum reflected. "It was a fun, challenging activity, and there was an interest in understanding more about beer."

This was how BrewHouse started to take shape. Salloum and his family have loved board games for as long as he can remember; a bonding activity between his kids, an event between his friends. Salloum knew he could turn his brewing knowledge into something that others could enjoy and share.

After a series of discussions with brewers across the province, Salloum solidified partnerships with 15 different micro-breweries, including Boshkung Brewing in Minden, and Haliburton Highlands Brewing in Carnarvon. "Each co-branding partner has a card in the game," explained Salloum. "On each one, there is a logo and a QR code to their websites, and each player can choose which brewery they would like to be in the game."

Salloum tested the game out with friends and family; tweaking and finessing the process until it came to fruition. And just this past weekend, Salloum made his rounds to the local breweries, dropping off BrewHouse to add to their merchandise sections. "Our partners know their audiences," said Salloum. "And up here, board games are a big part of being at the cottage." The games are available at Boshkung Brewing and Haliburton Highlands Brewing, and Salloum will start selling online, as well, but encourages everyone to visit their local breweries to support them.

"This is a great way to accumulate beer knowledge," said Salloum, "and have a little fun along the way."

Federal election; how to understand your vote

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

With the federal election slated for Monday, April 28, the political climate is abuzz with questions and concerns.

In an era where legitimate news sources are blocked on prominent social media channels, where can Canadians go to understand the breadth of the coming election?

The *Times* took some time to sit down with Jessica Slade, a senior policy analyst for Employment and Social Development Canada, and a lifelong resident of the Haliburton Highlands.

Slade knows the ins and outs of the Canadian government, having been intrinsically involved for the past 11 years, and is no stranger to tackling a neutral stance in an effort to educate voters. "I think you have to put aside the Liberals versus Conservative mindset, and see who can actually help our country," she said.

Hot on the heels of a recent provincial election, in which Conservative Premier Doug Ford secured another four years in power, many are rolling their eyes when it comes to heading to the polls once again. "But these are entirely different," noted Slade.

She likened the comparison of Ford's Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) Laurie Scott and Member of Parliament (MP) Jamie Schmale to different school levels. "It's like an elementary school teacher versus a high school teacher," she said. "There are similar values, teachings, and beliefs, but all in different contexts and environments. The way they spend their days are entirely independent of one another."

Conservative Laurie Scott won the provincial election seat for Haliburton Kawartha Lakes Brock by a landslide at the end of February. As a traditionally Conservative riding, it's no surprise that MP Jamie Schmale has been in his role since 2015, and was the first representative to place his signs locally upon the announcement of the upcoming federal election.

But it's a different election than it has been in the past, and Slade largely cites a circulation of misinformation as the root cause.

For the Liberals, Mark Carney is at the federal helm, in a change in power that seemed to have occurred fairly quickly, leaving some Canadians stumped at the shift.

But this is a move that has happened before. More than once, in fact. The first was Liberal John Turner in 1984, and the second was Conservative Kim Campbell in 1993. Both had taken over from long-serving prime ministers who were faced with dwindling popularity.

> "The biggest challenge out there is misinformation. You have to do your research."
>
> — JESSICA SLADE

But Slade broke this system down simply: "In an election, you are voting for the party, not the leader," she said. "The Liberal Party of Canada was the elected party, so when Trudeau stepped down, there was a vacant position."

In order to fill this vacancy, an internal vote is required amongst members of the party. Quite literally anyone can become a registered member of the party, and from there, a nomination process is put into place to select a suitable candidate.

Based on his background and experiences as the Governor of the Bank of Canada, Mark Carney was voted in as the leader of the Liberal Party, with over 85 per cent of Liberal members approving.

While this wasn't necessarily the individual who Canadians voted for specifically as Prime Minister, it remains fact that voters elect the political party, not the individual. On top of the Liberals, the other major players in this coming election are the Conservatives, the New Democratic Party (NDP), the Green Party, and the Bloc Quebecois.

"The biggest challenge out there is misinformation," said Slade. "You have to do your research. You can't just share things blindly. It perpetuates misinformation."

While Canadian news is banned on Facebook and Instagram, Slade noted that TikTok currently carries videos from legitimate Canadian news sources. She also encourages voters to visit the official websites for each party, and Elections Canada to find information on your riding. A common misconception is that you need a voter's card to cast your ballot, and while this is accurate for the United States, it is not a requirement for Canadians to vote.

"Plan out your vote," Slade said. "We have enough notice, and some people know they won't be around or are going on trips, but there are other ways to vote in advance, and you need to do your research. There are a lot of ways to make this easy for everyone."

HHHS welcomes new doctor to the team

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

Dr. Sharysse Kayoumedjian has officially started on with the Haliburton Highlands Family Health team, taking over the patients from Dr. Tina Stephenson, who retired in 2023. /photo submitted

It hasn't always been a straight-line forward for Dr. Sharysse Kayoumedjian.

She's seen her fair share of the world's corners, but now, the Haliburton Highlands is home. "Who would have thought that the first place I came to after coming home to Canada would be the place I'd settle?" Kayoumedjian laughed.

And it's been a long time since she's felt settled. The region's newest doctor officially started with Haliburton Highlands Family Health Organization on March 1, 2025. She has assumed all the patients of Dr. Tina Stephenson, who retired in 2023. "Thanks to Sharysse, 1,100 patients will have access to a very skilled physician," said Kim Robinson, the executive director of the Haliburton Highlands Health Team. "Her joining our group is a literal blessing. These patients would likely have been unattached to primary care if she did not decide to join our team."

Kayoumedjian originally hails from the Toronto area, but went to medical school in Saba, a small Caribbean island. "A lot of people from Canada and the United States will opt to go there instead of the few Canadian medical schools we have here," she explained. "It was a great experience. Very cute, very safe."

She then started training across the United States: Ohio, Brooklyn, Louisiana, to name a few; "all over the place," she chuckled, "I was constantly moving."

She started with the University of Buffalo to do her residency, right on the cusp of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Shortly after, the requirements to practice in Canada changed with the spiked need for physicians, and Kayoumedjian was able to transfer back to her home country. "I got my license, and I came right home," she said.

Shortly after returning to Canada, Kayoumedjian was scrolling through Facebook and saw a post for a long term care position, which piqued her interest. Upon inquiring about the position, Kayoumedjian was approached by Wendy Welch, the Haliburton County's physician recruiter. "Wendy explained that there was a clinic right in Haliburton," said Kayoumedjian, "so I thought I could give it a try."

Freshly licensed and ready to jump into the role, Kayoumedjian dove in head first at the local clinic in early 2024. "I kept coming and going," she reflected, "and I really, really enjoyed it."

At the same time, she was still based out of the GTA, and was balancing a series of contracts in Toronto and Uxbridge while she took on work out of the Haliburton clinic. "I started to realize that I didn't like the downtown vibe of the city," Kayoumedjian recalled. "I ended up missing the community I had found here. I loved going to work every day here."

She knew then that it was time for a change. And the change worked out for everyone. Kayoumedjian naturally fell into a professional working relationship with the staff and team at the Haliburton clinic, and had a roster of patients ready for her. "We are excited to see our team grow and to continue efforts to meet the healthcare needs of the community," said Robinson. "I would like to thank Wendy Welch for all of her hard work and continued efforts to recruit physicians to Haliburton County, the wonderful patients of our group who made Sharysse's locum experience with us so enjoyable, and to the physicians and staff who welcomed Sharysse and supported her."

Kayoumedjian has a particular interest in women's health, and supporting and advocating for those in need. "I am excited to take care of a group of people who maybe haven't had a family doctor before," she said. She is thrilled about her new position, and looking forward to connecting with the community as her role continues to take shape.

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Cut connections

THERE ARE few feelings greater than the euphoria of your Hydro being restored.

It's been a rough few days. For quite literally everyone in the county. Nearly everyone in the province.

It was a storm that we were anticipating. In this day and age, we can see the satellite images in pinks and purples and blues as they slide across our screens.

But I don't think anyone was quite expecting this.

Cracked trees, flooded basements, closed roads, crashed phone lines.

A series of unfortunate events, all compiled together.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

But when events like this occur, they serve as reminders for what we have. Those little things we take for granted oh so often. Light. Warmth. Connections.

We're no strangers to power outages. Though they aren't the most comfortable, we are lucky to have an abundance of flashlights and beeswax candles, and the kids lean into the cozy component.

The challenge was the cut in connections. It's not something we're used to, these days. We moan and groan about the constant inundation of contact, but in reality, it's something we're used to. The ability to pick up our phones and text or call anyone at whim.

But landlines had crashed as well. All phones cut.

It made me think about times in the past where there wasn't this constant crave for connections. As I watched my kids huddle around the fire in a comfortable quiet, I thought about an era where this was the norm. There's beauty in that simplicity, in that ease of life.

But the reality is that we are no longer in that time. We've run so far past that comfortable quiet that we are safer in the buzz of the bustle.

As we joined together as a team for the production of the *Minden Times* (no small feat considering the cut connections), while we navigated the logistics of pulling files and documents from clouds and servers, we discussed 'the sounds of life' and what we were missing.

The ping of cell phones. Running water. The click of the furnace humming to life.

We have it so easy, in our world. The little loss of these sounds of life has me thinking about other parts of the world, where many will never hear that comfortable cacophony.

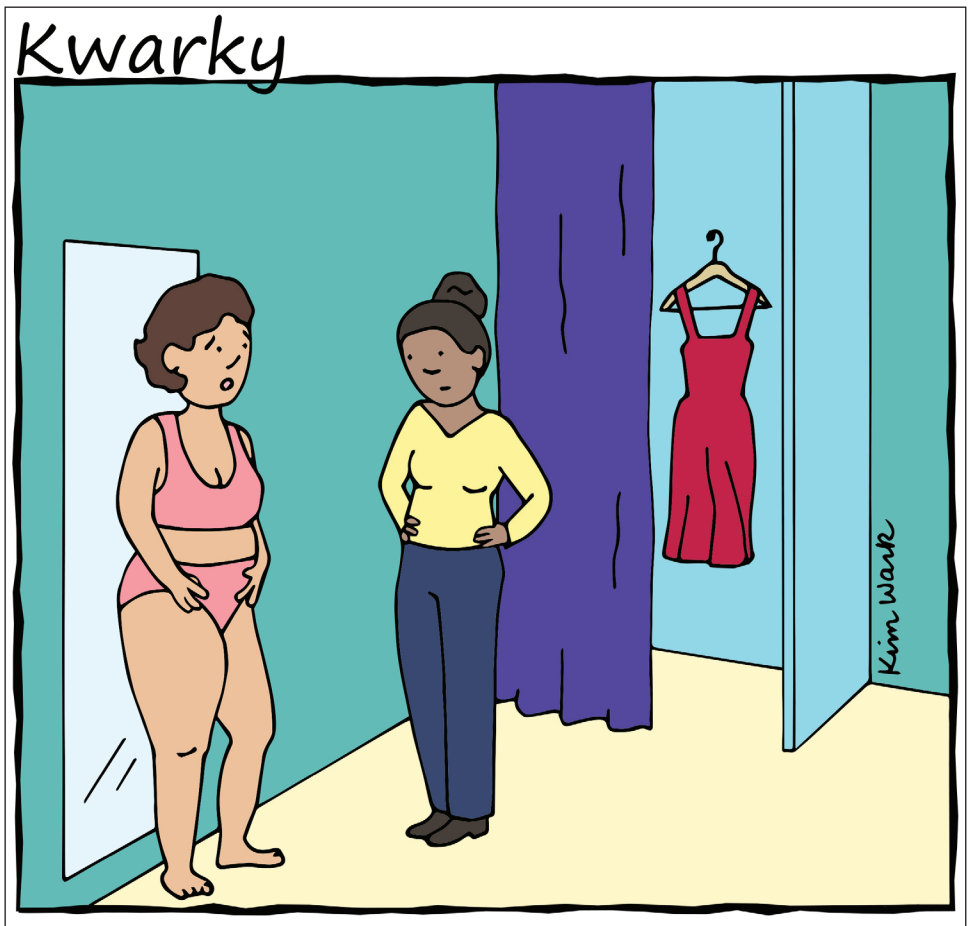
We take so much for granted. Light. Warmth. Connections.

And I always kick myself that it takes a natural disaster; a split second of charged changes that lights our worlds on fire and reminds us how easy we have it. It happens so fast; everything crumbling with the snap of one wire.

We should appreciate these little things all the time. It feels like the moment our life clicks back online, we revert to the buzz of the bustle. That comfortable place where we land in limbo until the next disaster shocks our cores.

That euphoria of Hydro being restored; a moment of gratitude we feel deep in our beings, for that split second. We should all be more mindful of that feeling.

And try to carry it forward in any way we can.



"The dress fits. It's my birthday suit that's tight."

Survival skills for the internet-free age

LIKE MANY people living in central Ontario, our lives have been disrupted by the recent ice storm. We were more fortunate than most. Our Hydro was only out for a day, which means we were merely inconvenienced. Also, we never experienced damage from ice, flooding, or falling trees or limbs.

Our only real issue was the loss of internet and cell service, which means we had no TV, phone, email, texts, or on-line services. This is still the case even as I write this. Which means, this morning I will have to drive to a place where internet service exists to send in this column. (I was going to send it in by homing pigeon but, apparently, computers are too heavy for them to carry.)

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

In any case, they say that with adversity comes something … but since I have no internet connection, I can't tell you what it is.

What I will say is that one of the things you quickly discover is without the internet and all it brings, you suddenly have plenty of time for other more important, meaningful things.

That's why the other day, I walked up to Jenn, who was reading perhaps her 43rd book of the ice storm and winked seductively.

"Do you have something in your eye?" she asked.

"No," I said, winking yet again.

"You're sure?" she said.

"I'm winking," I replied.

"Really?" she asked.

That's when I decided to try a more direct approach.

"Look," I said. "We're all alone. We're bored. We're not expecting company. It's just you and me. There's no TV or other distractions ..."

She then lowered her book for a moment and noted that I was a distraction. And not even a pleasant one, apparently.

Still, I persisted.

"Come on," I said. "You said you would."

"I have a headache," she answered.

"What I have in mind is good for a headache," I replied. "By the end of it you'll be releaxed …"

And that's when she said it, "For the tenth time, I do not want to learn how to tie a fly! It doesn't interest me in the least!"

I guess the point I'm trying to make here is that it is only during stressful times such as this that you find out who a person really is. Now, I know that when the going gets tough I will not be able to count on Jenn to help me fill my fly boxes for spring.

If we had the internet, I'd probably search for an on-line counsellor who specializes in these things.

The sad part is this did not seem to bother Jenn in the least. In less than a second, she returned to reading her book.

Likewise, I went back to my fly-tying table and tied a few more flies. But as I was tying my last one, it suddenly occurred to me that Jenn must think she is smarter than me with all her book worming. Then I mumbled, "I can't let both of us think that." So, I followed her lead, picked up a book, and sat on the couch. And I was surprised to learn it was a fine way to exercise the mind and pass the time.

I'm proud to say that since yesterday I have completed three. Better still, I only broke one crayon …

In Other Words

Columns and Letters to the Editor

Where to find election information online

WITH A FEDERAL election called for April 28, it's important to know where to find trustworthy information pertaining to this important part of our democratic process. Regardless of your political alignment or who you plan on voting for, understanding some of the information sources and where they fit into this process we're all participating in is crucial for you to exercise your right to vote effectively.

Elections Canada's website (elections.ca) should be your first stop when looking for election information. Elections Canada is our independent nonpartisan agency that conducts federal elections and ensures compliance with electoral legislation. Their website includes information on how, where, and when you can vote. You can also check that you are registered to vote and learn how to register or update your voter registration. Elections Canada also lists candidates that are running in your riding.

ERIN KERNOHAN-BERNING
Humans and Technology

If you want to know more about how our Canadian political system works, you can visit the Parliament of Canada website (OurCommons.ca). There you can find a primer on our constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. You can also look up each Member of Parliament and find what committees they serve on, what motions they voted on, and transcripts of what they have said in the House of Commons. Elections are a time for politicians to put their best face forward, however you can also learn a great deal about how well an MP has served their constituents by looking at the official public record of their work.

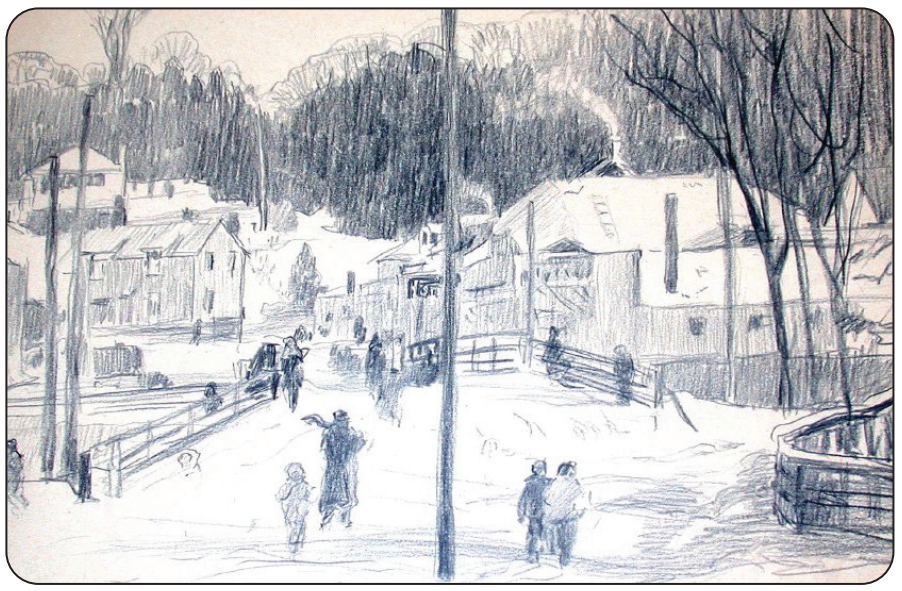
It can be difficult to make sense of all of the different political positions that exist among those running for office. One tool that can be useful for this is Vote Compass, created by political scientists at Vox Pop Laboratories. Vote Compass uses a questionnaire format based on the publicly available policies and positions released by each party in parliament. By answering how much you agree with each question, your aggregated opinion is placed on a matrix where you can compare your proximity to the different parties. You can also add weight to each question based on its importance to you, as well as see where you align on each question with a given party. Vote Compass is not meant to tell you who to vote for, but as a tool for exploring your own political leanings and is a good starting point for future exploration.

Opinion polls are another major feature of an election period, and it can feel like a new one comes out almost daily. There are a number of polling firms across Canada, and they collect information from representative samples of the Canadian population to extrapolate what the overall opinion of Canadians might be. Poll by poll, results can be quite similar or wildly different depending on the sample they collected information from and their methodology. One way to make a bit more sense of these opinion polls is to look at polling aggregators. There are a few polling aggregators that are worth looking at including 338Canada, CBC's Poll Tracker, and Polling Canada. A polling aggregator takes the numerous polls over a period of time and combines the results in a model that shows the probability of how a particular party might perform in the election (e.g.: the probability that they'll form our government).

Something to be aware of is that scammers love to take advantage of a moment, and there is the risk of scammers posing as polling firms to try and get your personal information. In Canada, the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) sets standards for polling and opinion research. These standards include keeping personal information confidential. Many of the major polling firms are accredited by the CRIC and are obliged to adhere to their standards. If you are contacted to participate in a poll and don't recognize the company name, it's a good idea to check the CRIC website (canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca) to see if it is accredited or check if it is listed by one of the polling aggregators. I received a text message from ERG National Research; however, this company has no website that I can find, are not accredited by the CRIC, and are not listed by any polling aggregator. So, not knowing if that is even a real organization, I deleted the text and reported it as junk.

Of course, another very important place to find election information, especially when it comes to our local candidates, is our local media. Haliburton County has a fantastic local media presence with three newspapers and two radio stations. So be sure to add them to your sources of federal election information.

Minden Memories



A pencil sketch by beloved painter, André Lapine, depicting a winter scene of Bobcaygeon Road, the Gull River bridge and the buildings in downtown Minden. This view appears to be from Frank Welch's home on Bobcaygeon Road. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

A message from County CAO Gary Dyke

On March 26, a regular County Council meeting including a public meeting to discuss the application by the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust to the Province of Ontario for the creation of the Milburn Kendrick Conservation Reserve began as scheduled.

As the council and public meeting began, a medical emergency occurred and as a result, the meeting was immediately cancelled. We will not be commenting on the details of the medical emergency at this time.

We appreciate the understanding of members of the public at the meeting, and those watching the meeting online at that time.

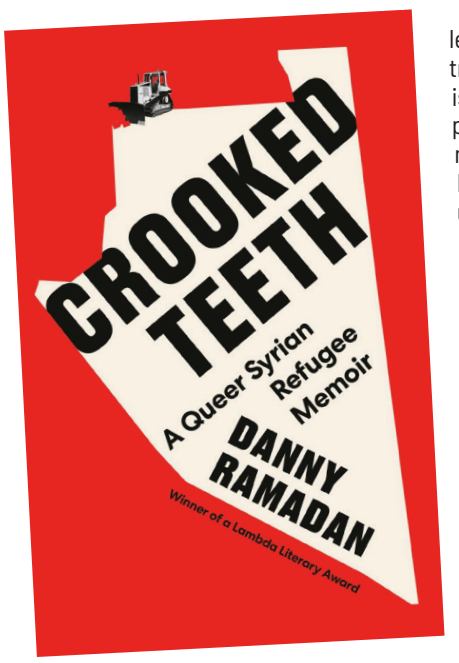
We thank the staff and first responders who attended for their care and effort.

The meeting will be rescheduled to another day. When available, rescheduled meeting information will be posted on the County website, on social media platforms and as public notice in local newspapers.

We thank the community for their support during this time.

Submitted

HCPL's Book of the Week



Danny Ramadan's *Crooked Teeth* is a fearless memoir that begins with an act of betrayal—turning his life into a story. A novelist used to fiction's shield, Ramadan revisits painful memories of Damascus, a city he can never return to. His journey spans queer safe houses, a secret party in Cairo, Arab Spring uprisings across the Middle East, a reckless hoax that threatens the safety of Syria's LGBTQ+ community, a traumatic six-week imprisonment, and fleeting moments of joy in Beirut. Finally arriving in Vancouver, he finds that exile brings its own struggles. In this deeply personal account, Ramadan challenges the oversimplified refugee narrative, embracing both sorrow and joy, uncertainty and resilience.

Crooked Teeth by Danny Ramadan is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Huskies Playoff Hockey

The Huskies faced off against the Toronto Jr. Canadiens on March 25 for the first home game of the second round of their playoff journey, losing 3-0. Due to the ice storm that slammed the province, the following games were cancelled and rescheduled. And updated list of games was not available at the time of press, but the Huskies website and social media channels are being updated as services become available. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Community events sponsored by

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Don't keep me or your event a secret!

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Not intended to solicit properties already listed for sale

Send your event listing to classifieds@haliburtonpress.com

Lenten Lunches
When: Wednesdays at noon
Where: April 2 – Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church
April 9 – Minden Bible Church
Service at noon followed by Soup Lunch.
By Donation.

Youth Unlimited Gym Night
When: Apr 4 - Sports and 9 Square 6:30 to 9p.m.
Where: Haliburton Highlands Secondary School
For Grades 6-12. For more info contact haliburton@youthunlimitedkaw.com.

The Loop Troupe Little Theatre presents Riches and Ransom Dinner Theatre
When: Saturday, April 5. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., Dinner at 6 p.m.
Where: Lloyd Watson Centre, Wilberforce
Who Kidnapped Miss Purscilla Bing?Immerse yourself in the drama, deception and dilemmas while you dine with the residents of Old Oaks Retirement Home as they celebrate the home's 50th anniversary. Tickets $35 per person. Includes a Roast Beef Dinner served by the Legion Ladies Auxiliary Branch #624. Tickets only available in advance until March 29 at Agnews General Store in Wilberforce.
For more info contact marybarker@bell.net 705-448-2290 or 613-334-1953.

Recurring events

Free Balanced Fitness and Active Social Senior Classes
When: Every second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 10 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All seniors are welcome. Group led by Registered Recreation Therapist

Bid Euchre
When: Wednesdays at 1 p.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion - Remembrance Hall
All welcome!

Seniors Chair Exercises
When: Thursdays at 1 p.m.
Where: St. George's Anglican Church, 617 Mountain Street
Please join us for safe and gentle exercises for seniors to help with balance, strength and flexibility. Free to join.

Cards/Euchre/Cribbage
When: Thursdays at 2:30 p.m.
Where: St. George's Church
617 Mountain Street

Lakeside Church Service
When: Sunday at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Where: 9 Park Street, Haliburton.
Whoever you are, wherever you've been, you are welcome here.

Residential school exhibit comes to Cultural Centre

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Times Staff

This year, from April 1 to June 25, *Bakaan nake'ii ngii-izhi-gakinoo'amaagoomin/ We Were Taught Differently: The Indian Residential School Experience* exhibit will be on display in the Welch Room of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre.

The exhibit was originally presented at the Lake of the Woods Museum in 2008. Initially, before it was opened, there were growing concerns by the local community as to whether or not the graphic content of the residential school system should be shown to the public.

"Discussions around the residential school experience were beginning to happen but were not as open as they are now," said Braden Murray, director of the MUSE (Lake of the Woods Museum). "The *We Were Taught Differently* exhibit project was a way to help educate the community about what actually happened in local residential schools in Kenora. The project was led by residential school survivors, elders, and descendants of survivors in conjunction with the NeChee Friendship Centre and the Lake of the Woods Ojibway Cultural Centre and dealt with the residential school experience in a raw and truthful way that hadn't been seen in the community, or anywhere else across Canada, at the time."

"We live in a very different information environment in 2025 than we did in 2007," said Murray. "That fear proved to be unfounded."

Since its initial unveiling in 2008, the exhibit has travelled extensively across Canada, and an additional second copy of the exhibit materials were made available to travel with the Grand Council Treaty #3 Wiisokotatiwin unit to survivor events across the Treaty #3 area, says Murray.

Why is this exhibit relevant to Haliburton County?

Haliburton County is located on Treaty 20 Michi Saagiig territory and is a part of the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig and Chippewa Nations, also known as the Williams Treaties First Nations.

"Indigenous Peoples were the original stewards of the land and waters we now call home," said Shannon Kelly, manager of cultural services. "Even though residential schools were not established in our area, we continue to feel their impact—through the intergenerational trauma experienced by Indigenous communities in the area, the gaps in public understanding, and the ongoing need for reconciliation."

Orange Shirt Day was first celebrated in 2013, based on symbology inspired by the accounts of Phyllis Jack Webstad. In 2021, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was announced as a statutory holiday and set on November 30.

Municipalities across Canada, including Haliburton County, recognize this federal holiday as a Canadian day of remembrance and reflection, held annually to acknowledge the legacy of the Indian residential school system and honour both survivors and their families, says Kelly.

The goal of hosting this exhibit is to acknowledge this dark part of Canadian history, to promote awareness about the Indian residential schools and the long-term effect they have had on Indigenous Peoples and to honour families who have had their lives touched by the schools, says Kelly.

The exhibit utilizes first-hand accounts from people who attended the residential schools and those who have been affected by them.

"It is an exhibit for everyone," said Kelly. "It was the hope of the original exhibit planning committee that this exhibit will play a part in the continuing process of personal and community healing and reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people across Canada."

After months of communication, the Minden Hills Cultural Centre team secured the exhibit at the end of 2024. With regular contact with Murray, the Director of the Lake of the Woods Museum, they have been advised on the use of their student-teacher guide, education teachers how to prepare students before viewing the exhibit.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre has also reached out to Indigenous members of the local community, as well as the Indigenous Education Consultant for Trillium Lakelands District School Board while planning to host this exhibit.

> "Indigenous Peoples were the original stewards of the land and waters we now call home."
>
> – SHANNON KELLY, MANAGER OF CULTURAL SERVICES

"The history and legacy of residential schools are part of the Ontario school curriculum," said Kelly. "There are almost 650 children and youth in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board who self-declare as Indigenous."

In addition to hosting the exhibit, the Minden Hills Cultural Centre will also be showing documentaries each month, as part of their National Film Board documentary screenings. *Cold Journey* will be shown on April 3 and *Finding Dawn* will be playing on May 1.

The Minden Hills Cultural Centre will be hosting activities on June 21 in recognition of National Indigenous Peoples Day. They also plan to host school programs for local students.

A barrel of fun

Boshkung Brewing held their first “Keg Curling” event on March 24 a the Minden Curling Club. The fun-filled event used Boshkung beer kegs on the fresh ice instead of traditional curling rocks. Mathew Renda, the owner of Boshkung, hopes to offer the event on a regular basis moving forward.
/photos submitted

JOB FAIR DAY 2025

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16
8:30 AM TO 2:30 PM

Haliburton Highlands
Secondary School Gym

HHSS RED HAWKS

Haliburton County Home Builders Association www.hchba.ca

THE HALIBURTON COUNTY HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HHSS IS WORKING TO ADDRESS THE EMPLOYEE SHORTAGE IN THE COUNTY!

Job Fair Day will be an event where businesses of all different sizes and industries from across Haliburton County will be on display in the high school gym for students to meet and learn what is available *close to home.* This is a perfect place for students to bring their resumes and talk to employers about co-op jobs, volunteer positions, summer jobs or post secondary employment.

This is not a ‘trade’ only Job Fair. We would like to include as many businesses as possible from across Haliburton County. We will also have outdoor space available for any participants who would like to bring larger tools or equipment. The more interactive your space is, the more engaged the students will be.

Questions?
Reach out to **Aggie Tose by phone at 705-457-6901 or by email info@hchba.ca**

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Let our 100+ years of combined experience work for you

JHS literacy group to meet at Minden Library

by THOMAS SMITH
Times Staff

What started originally as a four-day mindfulness workshop has grown into a full-fledged literacy group that meets regularly at the Minden Hills branch of the Haliburton County Public Library.

Every Friday, for the next eight weeks, the John Howard Society (JHS) will be hosting their book club from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. During these sessions, participants can come together and discuss *The Four Agreements*.

To increase accessibility, participants are encouraged to listen to the book as an audiobook. During this book club, there are activities to keep your mind active while listening to the book, as well as tools to aid in concentration.

People come from all over the county and from all walks of life to participate in the book club, says Dana Hetherton, chief executive officer of the John Howard Society of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County. Some of the participants travel from as far as Tory Hill to participate.

"It is not just about reading and writing," said Hetherton. "It is a source of community, support, and finding skills while doing it."

The book club is not only about reading and discussing *The Four Agreements*, but has become a source of community for the participants in which they can share their skills, seek assistance from the program administrators, and engage with each other. With their original benchmark for the program being 50, Hetherton says that they have doubled capacity to 100 people with their increased demand.

Besides the book club, the John Howard Society offers many programs and services through their Minden and Lindsay locations, and through their programming at the Central East Correctional Facility.

Some of the services that the John Howard Society offers includes anger management courses, direct accountability programs, men's transitional housing, record suspension services, and literacy and basic skills development.

The purpose of these programs is to allow individuals to achieve their milestones in a variety of areas including in education, skills for employment, or completing their high school diploma, says Hetherton. All of these programs and services are offered at no costs to participants. Recently, they have also been offering transportation services to some of the programs to further increase accessibility.

Resume workshops, math and reading skills, and financial literacy skills have also been taught to program participants through the John Howard Society. Through one-on-one mentorship, the John Howard Society strives to offer client-driven learning with many of their services, including literacy skills. There are also programs offered to both adults and teens.

"We do not discriminate," said Hetherton. "Everyone is welcome to attend."

At the Central East Correctional Centre, the John Howard Society offers literacy and basic skills to incarcerated individuals. Through a variety of different means such as worksheets and group offerings in meeting pods, program facilitators are able to access and assist with program attendee's goals in literacy and other skills. Even with restrictions to the content that can be presented and a limitation of supplies that can be brought in, the John Howard Society continues to operate their literacy and basic skills program at the correctional centre.

The program has been quite popular, says Hetherton.

The John Howard Society of Kawartha Lakes and Haliburton County is primarily funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, and Skills.

Overall, the goal of the John Howard Society is to address crime and its causes and to work towards effective, just, and humane responses to the issue. Their mandate is to help those affected by the justice system to develop basic life skills, navigate issues involved with criminal justice, and build productive futures after incarceration.

In addressing various issues such as poverty and literacy, the John Howard Society offers programs and services in bettering people's lives and aims to prevent people from entering Canada's prison system.

Through the tag-teamed effort of their staff in Minden, the John Howard Society has reignited the services offered through their Minden location, located at the back of the Heritage Plaza on IGA Road. Their team also works tirelessly to connect with other services such as the Minden Community Food Centre and the YWCA, to assure that they have the contacts for anyone needing any types of assistance.

Hetherton welcomes anyone who is interested in volunteering with the John Howard Society to check out their website johnhoward.on.ca/kawartha/ or to email her directly at dhetherton@jhscklh.on.ca.

Public health unit braces against measles outbreak

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Times Staff

Though there hasn't been any reported measles infections in this area, public health officials are buckling down against its possibility.

The communities served by the Haliburton Kawartha Northumberland Peterborough Public Health Unit do not currently have active measles cases.

From a resource perspective, this is a heavy burden on health units and can easily take away from other public health priorities. Measles is a potentially serious disease that is highly contagious and easily prevented with vaccination.

Elsewhere in the province, there are 350 current cases across 11 health units including neighbouring public health units.

Dr. Thomas Piggott said 96 per cent of those infected were unvaccinated or had only one dose of the vaccine, and that these outbreaks are linked to declining vaccination rates.

"Measles is something that we haven't had to talk about in a long time," he said. "And I had hoped that in my public health career I wouldn't have to talk much about it."

But measles has taken its place among such emerging diseases as whooping cough, Mpox, and the ever-present COVID-19.

"There are a handful of outbreaks and pandemic-related diseases that we've seen," Piggott said. "Really, this is a big part of the reason why we wanted to bring the health units together in a merger."

The Peterborough Public Health Unit joined the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit in January to form the Haliburton Kawartha Northumberland Peterborough entity.

"We knew that at a capacity level through the COVID-19 pandemic, we were challenged," he said. "Unfortunately, one of other merging health unit counterparts, they're whole merger has been largely challenged as a result of dealing with one of the largest measles outbreaks in the province.

"It's become an all hands on deck effort."

Piggott said preparations have been underway that has included ongoing school surveillance, public education awareness, and contact tracing readiness.

Piggott said the outbreak has come as close as Hastings County and Simcoe County.

The challenge presented by a large outbreak like the current one is vaccine effectiveness. Two doses of the vaccine has proven to be 97 per cent effective, he said.

"You start to see break-through cases is what it's called," he said. "And that's what we're seeing here (in Ontario)."

There has been 31 hospitalizations for measles this year in Ontario. One of those patients required intensive care. There has been no deaths.

One child died last year in Ontario due to measles.

"This is a very serious illness for children," Piggott said. "Potentially life-threatening. And the tragic thing is that it is very preventable with vaccine."

However, because measles is so very infectious, a population requires a high vaccination rate to achieve herd immunity.

There are 128 schools under the umbrella of the Haliburton Kawartha Northumberland Peterborough Public Health Unit. In a dozen of those school, vaccine coverage is less than 80 per cent when more than 95 per cent is needed to stop an outbreak.

"Measles can present as a tremendous burden on health units," said Dr. Natalie Bocking. "It is a huge amount of work to respond to even just one measles case."

In the current era where physicians and clinicians are not familiar with measles, one case will go through as many as three healthcare settings before a diagnosis is confirmed, she said.

"And that results in hundreds of contacts that need to be followed up," Bocking said. "So health units have to put entire teams together of call centres, immunization clinics to catch people up."

The Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine is very effective, she said. People receive one dose as infants and a second dose between the ages of four and six years old.

"Our challenge right now is that during the pandemic there was for a multitude of reasons a decrease in uptake of vaccines," Bocking said. "What we are seeing is still a bit of recovery post-pandemic of either families that weren't able to access vaccines during the pandemic or the legacy of misinformation and hesitancy related of the use of vaccines."

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Nature's ecological services

Bittern - Wetlands support a wide range of ecological services including biodiversity. /photo by Rick Whitteker

by **RICK WHITTEKER**
Special to the Times

I have recently been introduced to the concept of ecological services. These services represent the total of all the direct and indirect benefits that people derive from healthy ecosystems. Within this simple statement, there is much to unpack.

Ecological services are commonly broken down into four categories that include provisioning, regulating, supporting and cultural services. Provisioning is the easiest to understand, with nature providing us with the raw materials we need to survive including food from soil, lakes and oceans, medicines from plants, shelter from trees, steel from iron ore and fresh water from ground water, lakes and rivers. Nature supplies the raw material from which we manufacturer products to meet all our needs, thereby providing the basis to our economy.

Ecological regulating services are those roles that nature supports that provide the quality control of the air, water and the climate. One of the best examples of this is the role wetlands play; they provide a wide range of regulatory services. While some people see wetlands as unproductive wastelands, they play a key role as environmental regulators.

The ecological services of wetlands are easily overlooked until they are needed. Wetlands tend to mitigate flooding by soaking up and swelling when excessive water is in the system. This extra moisture is slowly released into the surrounding ecosystem once conditions become drier. Wetlands also provide filtration services, purifying water by slowing water flow down and allowing contaminants, like phosphorus and nitrogen to settle in the wetland substrate. Unique aquatic plants, like cattail, absorb toxic nutrients.

Plant matter decomposes in wetlands very slowing, especially in bogs, and builds up into what we call peat. Peat is sequestered carbon. This stored carbon is released slowly into the atmosphere, helping to stabilize our climate. Wetlands are also particularly important for migrating waterfowl and a host of other wildlife who rely on these aquatic environments for rest from migration, breeding, feeding, and shelter. Wetlands contribute to the stabilizing influence of ecological biodiversity.

The County of Haliburton experienced significant flooding in 2013 and again in 2019. A state of emergency was declared and there was finger pointing at Parks Canada regarding the management of water through the dam system, especially in the Gull River watershed. We now depend on human made infrastructure; however, our water management issues are exacerbated by our habit of filling in or degrading our wetland environments which provide flood mitigation services for free!

Our forests provide the raw materials for many important products we need but they also provide invaluable support to other ecological services. Trees provide cooling shade, promote rainfall through transpiration, support biodiversity and help regulate air pollution. Forests have a major influence on climate as they store carbon and other greenhouse gases. They are the engine of global oxygen production through photosynthesis and play a key role in the water cycle, nutrient cycle, soil formation and erosion control.

Insects and other pollinators also provide critical ecological support services. About 75 per cent of all flowering plants and about 35 per cent of all food crops need pollinators to produce. Protecting our pollinators is a vital environmental action we can all take, thereby supporting the important ecological service they provide.

Finally, a walk in the woods, a paddle, birdwatching, a trail ride or lakeside lounging all provide mental and physical health benefits. By foot or motorized, time in nature is restorative.

These non-material benefits provide us with a sense of place and a feeling of being centred or grounded. Finding spiritual connections in nature calms our mind, slows our breathing and helps us feel connected to something that eases stress and fosters peacefulness. As we become more urban and our lives are more sped up and complicated, the cultural ecological service of nature plays an essential role in our physical, mental and spiritual health.

Understanding the ecological services of nature helps us to realize the importance in finding a balance between the needs of humanity and the importance of protecting functioning ecosystems which provide these essential life sustaining services.

Insects play a vital pollinator role for our flowers and food crops. /photo by Lisa Tolentino

Sudoku brought to you by

SUDOKU

2			1					
	1		6	4				
					5			6
	9	3	5					
		6			1		5	
	4						3	9
		9	8				6	
6	5							
		4			7	1	2	

Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 13

Vermont forester teaches people how to love their forest

by **THOMAS SMITH**
Times Staff

A forester, content creator, and punk rocker walk into Haliburton Forest.

Can anyone hear him?

Well, a filled seminar room at Haliburton Forest on Monday, March 24 sure could.

"Writing books is something that other people do," opened Ethan Tapper. "Certainly, not foresters. We don't do that."

After attending the University of Vermont, Tapper stumbled into a Forestry major after going on a wilderness trip with an ex-girlfriend. Since then, he got hooked on learning about forests and engaging with them as complex ecosystems.

Tapper has worked as an independent consulting forester as well as county forester, advising thousands of landowners. Tapper was also named Forester of the Year by the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance in 2021. Currently, he has been on tour for his book *How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World* throughout Canada and the USA since September last year.

After presenting his book at Kenyon College in Ohio on March 20, Tapper presented his book in Peterborough to Take Cover Books on March 21, in Peterborough again for the Kawartha Land Trust on March 22, at Haliburton Forest on March 24, and is finishing his brief Canadian stint of his book tour with two dates at Laurentian University in Sudbury on March 25 and 26.

"There was no one out there, writing about these things in the way that I wanted to tell it," said Tapper.

Afterwards, Tapper began writing for one hour every morning. Sentence by sentence, chunk by chunk.

After three years, Tapper finally convinced himself that the heaps of writing scraps that he had banked would one day form a book. In the fourth year, a friend told him to tell everyone that he was writing a book, so then we would be too embarrassed not to finish it. This method worked for him, with the book being picked up by Broadleaf Books and the multi-year editing process began. The book was finally published in September of last year.

While writing his book, Tapper also purchased 175 acres of forest just west of Burlington, Vermont. The forest was heavily degraded, with all of the older, high grade trees on the land being harvested to sell for lumber. All that was left were sickly, low-grade trees. Amongst the left behind trees there was an infestation of Japanese barberry, an invasive species that many audience members said has not spread to Haliburton County yet.

"It would have been a greater kindness to just cut all the trees," said Tapper.

Tapper says that he applied his writing method, little by little, towards tending his forest. By the day or even an hour of his time, he slowly worked towards regenerating his forest.

In June of 2024, Tapper started his own forestry company called Bear Island Forestry.

"Once it seemed that there were only two paths to follow," said Tapper. "A status quo that saw forests and other ecosystems as commodities and an opposing force that sought to protect ecosystems from ourselves, to leave them alone."

Tapper discussed how humans are permanently a part of forests. With the way humans have altered the environment and the need for lumber to build things like homes, the collaboration between humans and forests is a necessity for life.

Ethan Tapper presented a talk on How to Love a Forest, using reading form his recent book *How to Love a Forest: The Bittersweet Work of Tending a Changing World.* /THOMAS SMITH Staff

Tapper says that if you want someone to assess the health of your forest and have them do something about it, call a forester.

"In the forestry world, I am a bit of a unicorn," said Tapper. "And by that, I mean, I like talking to people."

With many foresters getting into the industry to spend time in forests, Tapper says it is rare for foresters to communicate issues with forests.

"The cutting of trees done in the right way, can be this profoundly positive, lifegiving thing," said Tapper. "But if nobody explains to the public who are inherently confused, how are they going to know?"

The tools that are utilized to harvest and cull parts of the forests are the same parts that he has seen give it life, says Tapper. These tools include his Timberjack 230E skidder and chainsaw.

In his talk, Tapper described his land as a 'junkyard of the anthropocene'. A struggling remnant leftover after humans have used, then abandoned the remains.

On his land, Tapper began hunting antlerless deer in order to give young saplings and other plants in the lower levels of the forest. While he was raised not to hunt does, Tapper said he had to cull them as killing bucks does little to reduce deer populations. One buck can mate with several does, but not vice versa. Vermont has also relaxed its bow hunting laws, allowing more people to hunt antlerless deer.

In Tapper's home state of Vermont, predators like cougars and wolves have been extirpated. Without human intervention, the populations will continue to become unsustainable.

"I learned I could love deer and kill deer, that I could love trees and kill trees, and that to do so could be an act of profound courage and compassion," writes Tapper in How to Love a Forest.

Tapper finished his talk discussing some of his favourite trees and plants which included sweetfern, lowbush blueberry, and the mighty oak tree, amongst many others.

While the ecosystems in Vermont are different from those of Ontario, Tapper says that his talk was to install a sense of hope. His hope is that people will continue to learn about our relationships that we have with forests and accept that in order to show love to them and keep them for generations, we must intervene with some natural processes.

Cutting down trees, killing deer, and digging through the soil may feel like it is causing destruction and causing you distress, but Tapper says that coming to terms with those feelings is necessary in order for his forest to survive.

"At Bear Island, the forest on the mountain lives a life without beginnings or endings," writes Tapper. " Like this world, the forest will always be a mess, always incomplete, always a map of scars. There is nowhere to arrive, no final destination to attain, no endings, and no perfect solutions."

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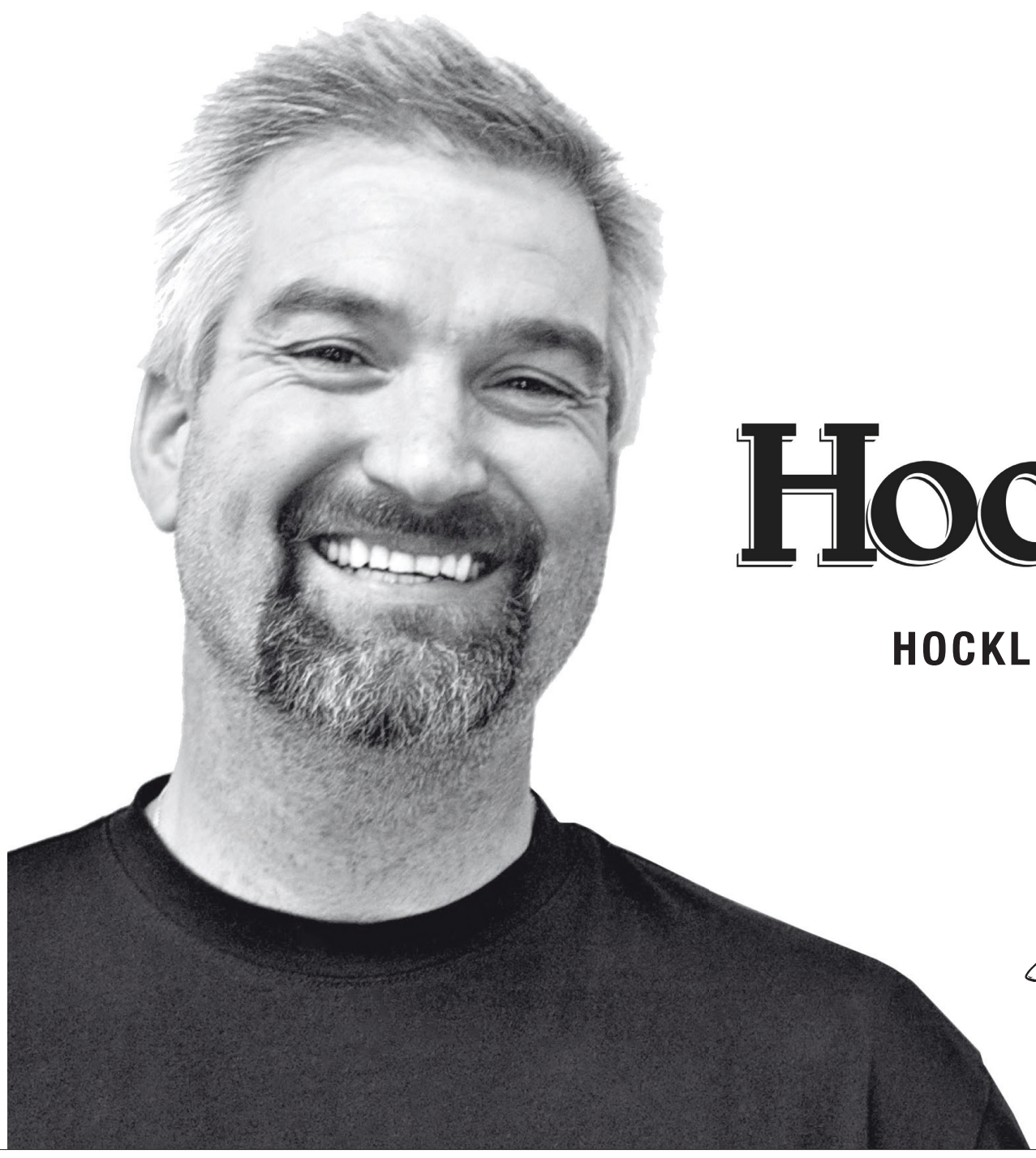

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650 OBITUARIES

Gladys "Madeleine" (Rumble) Howarth

Gladys "Madeleine" (Rumble) Howarth passed away at Royal Terrace, Palmerston, on Monday, March 24, 2025, in her 106 th year. Loving mother of Elaine Macdougall of Durham, formerly of Elmwood. Cherished grandmother of Stewart (Joanne) Macdougall, Ruth Macdougall, Valerie (John) Griffin, and Harold (Amanda) Macdougall, and great-grandmother of 12. Dear sister of Isobel Tucker of Tottenham. She will be missed by many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. Predeceased by her husband Harold Howarth, her son-in-law Walter S. Macdougall II, her brother Stewart (Jean) Rumble, her brother-in-law Ralph Tucker, and her parents David and Gladys (Cowie) Rumble .A funeral service honouring Madeleine's life was held at Rhody Family Funeral Home, Chesley, on Saturday, March 29, 2025, at 2 p.m. Spring inurnment in the Elmwood Cemetery. Memorial donations to the Heart & Stroke Foundation, Canadian Cancer Society, Salvation Army, Hanover & District Hospital Foundation, or the Irondale Community Church (cheques payable to Bark Lake Cultural Developments) would be appreciated as expressions of sympathy. www.rhodyfamily.com

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$1.2 million cut expected

Board considering layoffs, school closures

by Andrew Milne

The board of education expects to have approximately one month to cut $1.2 million from a $7.2 million operation.

The board will be considering drastic measures to make the cuts — including closing smaller schools, reducing the school week to four days from five, selling board property and laying off teaching staff.

Director of education Brad Saunders said last week however that, owing to the timing of the announcement, any cuts made cannot possibly begin to take effect until September of 1996.

This, he says, compounded with the limited time the board has to make the cuts — will make the job considerably more difficult for the board and its staff.

The board had been preparing to make cuts, however, they had been led to believe that the cuts would not be quite so deep.

Said board chair Wendy Ladurantaye, "We had communications with the minister's office, and OPSBA (the schools board's association) seemed to feel they had a handle on what was going to happen... The depth of the cuts comes as something of a surprise."

Said Saunders, "I'm distressed for two reasons primarily — one is related to the size of the grant cut, but equally the timing of the grant cut. We are now three months into our fiscal year. In terms of negotiating any cuts with our employee groups, that's a time consuming process... Optimistically the most that we're going to be able to save out of this calendar year is 40 percent of the budget items — whatever we can save from September through December... The timing of this is really a very insidious part of this whole exercise."

The anticipated cut takes the Haliburton board's provincial

(more on page 5)

Maple Fest a sweet success

The inaugural Maple Fest celebrations in Haliburton County proved to be very popular. This group was captured on film at Wintergreen Maple Syrup and Pancake Barn Saturday afternoon. Dozens of maple syrup producers across the county opened their operations to the public. This special event encouraged people to travel long distances to participate.

It's that time again

While the weather may not be saying spring is just around the corner, the calendar does. And with spring comes daylight saving time. This Saturday night (April 6) turn your clocks ahead by one hour. We gain an extra hour of daylight in the evening, and hopefully the weather will take the hint and join in our search for milder temperatures.

Series opener decided in overtime

by Jerry Grozelle

"It's going to be a heck of a series," said Minden Monarchs' coach Brian Shaw after Saturday night's game against the Zurich Storm.

It was the first game of the all-Ontario bantam E division finals and the Monarchs scratched out a 4-3 win in overtime. The win was especially sweet for the Monarchs in front of an appreciative hometown crowd.

"I was pretty proud of the boys," Shaw added. "It was great for them to win it in overtime. The first game in a series like this is really important."

Zurich kept a close rein on Minden captain Ryan Anderson. He wasn't given much space to manoeuvre. But, as Shaw points out, that left some other players open and with the depth of this Minden team, the opposition can't shadow all of the potential scorers.

Nick Kulas was the beneficiary of some of the attention paid to Anderson by the Storm. Kulas scored a hat trick, all of Minden's goals in regulation time.

Kulas opened the scoring late in the first period. Philip Daniels let a shot go from the point and Kulas was cruising in front of the net at just the right time to get his stick on the rebound an d put it past the Zurich netminder. Gaten Davis also drew an assist.

The cheers from the Minden fans had barely settled when Zurich replied with the equalizer. Jarrett Jeffrey was left unmolested in the slot long enough to get a shot away that beat Minden goalie Ashley Walker. Just 16 seconds had elapsed between the two goals.

The second period was almost half over when Kulas scored his second goal. Steve Ecclestone centered a pass to Kulas, who spun around and backhanded the puck into the Zurich net. Gaten Davis picked up an assist on that one as well.

A half dozen hats were tossed onto the ice with 2:58 remaining in the middle frame. That's when Kulas rounded out his hat trick, tucking the puck past Zurich netminder Nick Regier from the doorstep.

The Storm got one back with 1:07 left in the frame when Matt Denomme one-timed a pass from behind the net into

(more on page 16)

Bantams go ahead two games to none

In Sunday afternoon's contest the Monarchs defeated The Storm 7-2 to take a two game lead in the best of five final. Chris Nielson scored three goals, Nick Kulas picked up two and Jason Horsley and Chris Kerr each scored in Sunday's win. A complete report on the game in next week's edition of The Times.

The action moves to Zurich this Friday and Saturday.

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